(In million kg.)

State	Production during 1996-97
Assam	419.25
West Bengal	160.00
Other North Indian States	9.35
Tamil Nadu	118.42
Kerala	63.42
Karnataka	4.87
All India	775.31

Marginal shortfall in the production of tea vis-a-vis the target has been on account of adverse agro-climatic conditions in the tea growing areas of South and North India.

(c) and (d) Exports of tea in 1996-97 are estimated at 162.86 million kg. as against a target of 180 million kg.

Decline in export in quantity terms has been on account of lower imports of tea by countries like Russia, Poland, Ukraine and Egypt.

(e) In order to increase production of Tea, Tea Board has been operating various developmental schemes to encourage activities such as replantation, extension planting, setting up of new plantations, assistance to small growers in extension activities and research and development.

Government and the Tea Board have been analysing country-wise exports of tea giving special attention to areas offering potential. Tea Board also acts to remove bottlenecks in exports to individual markets whenever these are noticed.

Other steps taken to increase exports of Indian tea include (i) participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad; (ii) media compaign to increase consumer awareness of speciality of Indian tea and campaign to popularise the Tea Board marketing symbol which stands for pure Indian tea.

The 9th Plan proposals for tea inter-alia include programmes to increase production and to promote export with a total outlay of Rs. 1378 crores.

Dues from Central PSU to Karnataka

6645. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of Central Public Sector Undertakings in Karnataka;

(b) the amount due to Karnataka Electricity Board as on date from these Public Sector Undertakings towards power supplied; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to pay the dues to Karnataka Electricity Board by these Undertakings ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c) There are 16 Central PSUs which have their registered offices in the State of Karnataka. As per available information; out of these enterprises, no outstandings are pending for payment in respect of 8 Central PSUs. The amount of outstandings keeps on varying from time to time due to the varying agreements between the supplier and receiver of power, which is not monitored by the Central Government. These are settled by the respective parties.

Allotment of Coal Blocks to Power Project

6646. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the Times of India dated December 17, 1997 under caption "First mega power project derailed over coal blocks";

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The earlier North Karanpura STPS later shifted to a site at Nabinagar was originally proposed to come up in the Central sector and at that time coal from captive blocks of North Karanpura Coalfield was identified as the fuel source. The Ministry of Power had asked Power Grid Corporation to call international tenders inviting private parties to set up the power plant alongwith mining of the captive coal block at North Dadhu. This block has over 900 million tonnes of geological coal reserves which is sufficient to meet the requirement of this power plant for a period of 30 years. The Ministry of Coal had been advised